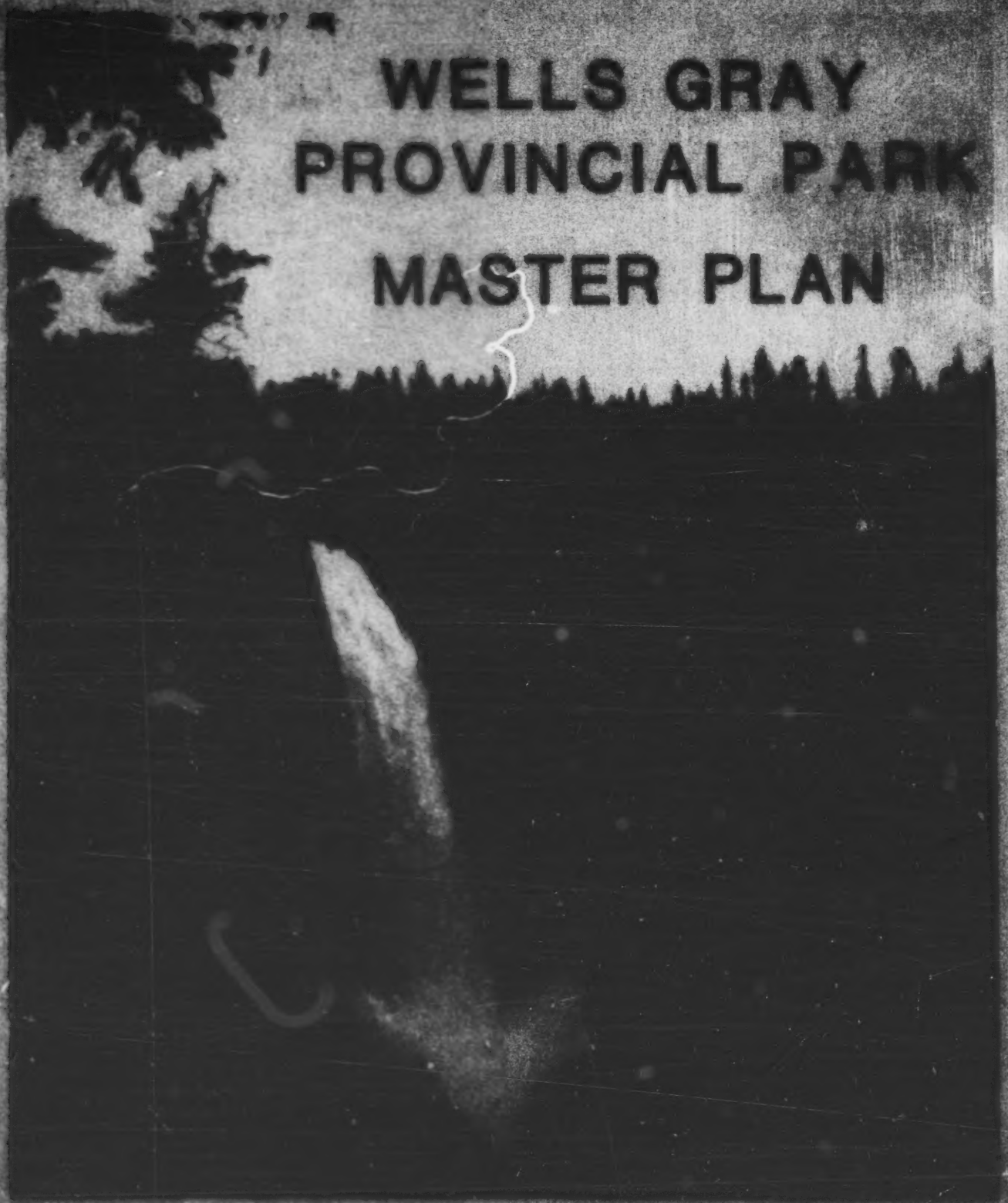
WELLS GRAY PROVINCIAL PARK MASTER PLAN



Province of British Columbia
Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing
September 1978

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2-2-4-1-27

WELLS GRAY PARK
MASTER PLAN

(Draft)

September, 1985

Province of
British Columbia

MEMORANDUM

To: Honourable Minister
Anthony Brummet

Southern Interior Region
Date: 85.09.19
File: 2-2-4-1-27

I am pleased to submit for your consideration this draft plan. It has been prepared by a team of Parks Division staff drawn from all sections of this Division's responsibilities. Considerable public input has been received and contributed to many of the key directions which this plan charts for our future management of the park.

With your concurrence we intend to release the draft for review with the public at a series of formal meetings. A summary of comments will then be submitted to you along with Parks Division recommendations for your action.

V. Collins
Assistant Deputy Minister

Approved for
Public Review:

Minister

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PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

- Wells Gray, consisting of over 5200 sq. km, is an immense and richly endowed park representing three of British Columbia's major landscapes, and containing numerous biotic, geological, hydrological and historical features and themes of provincial recreational and scientific significance.

- The dominant theme that Wells Gray Park conveys to visitors is "wilderness"; the park offers a wealth of recreational opportunities in settings dominated by wild nature. Under this plan 85% of the park is zoned wilderness.

- The dual challenge to park management is to protect the high natural quality of the park while encouraging recreational visitation.

- Increasing accessibility in strategic locations in the park is the major requirement for achievement of greater public appreciation and use of the park.

- The park offers the following priority visitor programs: auto-access sightseeing and touring, auto-access destination, interpretation of natural and human history. Other lower priority programs are winter recreation, wild river recreation, motor boat touring, fishing, hunting, hiking, canoeing, horseback riding, alpine appreciation, and research. Emphasis varies widely throughout the park.

- There is a strong role defined for the private sector to provide recreational guiding, charter, rental and other services to the public, within the overriding context of protecting a wild area.

- The keystone new opportunities and services which are proposed involve improvement of access to key park feature areas:
(a) within the existing road system (b) new lake access opportunities on Azure Lake (c) study of trail access improvements Ray Lake/Goat Peaks and (d) new road across the Clearwater at Bailey's Chute. While none of the "new" accesses are considered urgent - i.e. requiring immediate action - they are essential to Wells Gray Park being effectively used and understood by the public.

PLAN ORGANIZATION

The material presented in this document is organized in a manner which is intended to give priority to presentation of proposed long term plans for the park. For this reason purely technical information on the resources, present recreation use, planning issues, etc. will be available in Appendices and do not appear in this text.

The plan is structured as a progression from the general and long term, ie. SECTION 1 THE ROLE OF WELLS GRAY PARK through to the specific and short term ie. SECTION 3 ZONE PLANS.

Between these extremes is the section which provides key statements of policy and objectives for all RESOURCE and VISITOR SERVICE management concerns in the park. This section provides interpretation of the Role Statement, establishes the relative order of priority for each management concern, and gives the direction from which the PLANS are taken.

Wells Gray is a complicated park. The intent of this plan is to provide a relatively simple framework which, over the long term, will guide and permit further detailed planning and decision making.

There are four broad inter-related issues that are central to understanding and planning for Wells Gray Park. These are:

1. What is Wells Gray Park's role and potential in the park system? What are its chief assets and how might these be best managed and shared with visitors?

2. What land management policies are appropriate, particularly in consideration of the Nature Conservancy, possible additions to the park, and private inholdings where non-conforming land uses may occur?

3. What forest, fish and wildlife resource management policies are appropriate, particularly in consideration of forest health (fuels, fire, disease), fishery capabilities, wildlife populations and habitats (especially caribou, grizzly, and moose), habitat enhancement and recreational pressures (fishing, hunting, non-consumptive uses)?

4. How should the park be made useful and accessible to recreationists, while protecting its prime values? The immensity of Wells Gray is a formidable barrier to recreational use and appreciation; therefore it is necessary to evaluate travel modes (roads, horses, helicopters, etc.) that could overcome present access difficulties.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Wells Gray Park was established in 1939 and was named for the Honourable Wellesley Gray, Minister of Lands for British Columbia. Consisting of 527,305 hectares, it is the third largest provincial park in British Columbia. Located centrally in the province, 410 air kilometres northeast of Vancouver and 137 air kilometres north of Kamloops, Wells Gray Park is accessible by road and by air.

The climate of Wells Gray park is typical of mountainous areas in northern temperate latitudes. Winters are long and moderately cold; mean temperatures are below freezing and there is heavy snow accumulation. Summers are mild in temperature, and relatively dry from mid-July to mid-September. However summer storms of short duration, often accompanied by lightning, are also fairly common. As in any mountainous area, moisture and temperature vary strongly with elevation, aspect, and windward/leeward effect.

The park straddles a series of three distinct landscapes. There is a general transition from southwest to northwest of increasing ruggedness, wetness of climate, and resulting vegetation pattern. Southern and southwest areas are generally of rolling or hilly terrain, with some broad flat areas (lava flows) and some dome-like mountains of modest elevation. Approximately 70% of the southern region of the park is below the alpine treeline. Northwards, the terrain becomes extremely rugged, with very prominent peaks (2400 to 3000 metres) poised above deep, linear valleys, and the forest cover is increasingly confined to the lower slopes, such that only about 30 percent ofthe total area is below treeline. Water has a very significant presence throughout the park. There are five large natural lakes occupying a total of 220 square kilometres, a number of mid-sized lakes, and many small lakes at all elevations. The park contains most of the drainage basin of the Clearwater River, including 100 percent of the drainage of its major tributary, the Murtle River. In the high mountains, glaciers and icefields add to the ruggedness and formidability of the landscape.

When the park was established, the Forest Branch was the administering agency. The decision to set aside this vast area was based upon considerations of tourism, hunting, fishing, and waterfalls and other scenery. The following excerpt from a 1939 letter from the local Forest Ranger outlines his his rationale for recommending a park:

> "I am herewith suggesting that a considerable area of the Clearwater Valley be set aside as a Park... I believe this area would benefit by being so administered, as with its natural attractions for Tourists it is sure to be well peopled during the dry weather, and... in a park people are naturally more careful with fire."

"The agricultural area of the valley which all lies to the south of the Murtle River, is mostly all old burn, but north of this point it is still mostly all green timber, the area is already famous for its swift water and lake fishing of the well known Kamloops Trout."

"The area I would recommend would include the whole of the watershed of the Clearwater River north of the Murtle River, and include Murtle Lake, Mahood Lake, Clearwater Lake, Blue Lake, and Hobson Lake, besides numerous smaller lakes, and of the five mentioned above, all of which are good sized bodies of water, four of the five will provide the best of fishing and swimming, and are reached by saddle horse trails from the end of the present highway, (25 miles up the Clearwater), the Murtle Lake, which was only stocked a few years ago, is now teeming with Kamloops Trout, and is reached either by a trail from the southwest, along the Murtle River, or from a trail commencing at the town of Blue River on the C.N.R., thence west up the Blue River on a splendid trail of easy grade.

"All of the above five large lakes, as well as many smaller ones, draining into the main Clearwater River, which has been famous for its "Rainbow" ever since pioneer days, and now the Murtle river, a tributary, is also producing Kamloops Trout in abundance, which are coming down stream from the heavily stocked Murtle Lake."

"The scenic attractions of the Dawson falls and Helmcken falls on the Murtle River, are amongst the finest in the interior of B.C. There are also many other beautiful waterfalls in this area as well as Glaciers and snow peaks all summer, also fine soda springs available on the present trails -- so that the Tourist or fisherman has only to bring along with him the "necessary" that goes with good strong soda mineral water."

The park has long been famous for its waterfalls, lakes, mountains, volcanic features, fish, and wildlife, although the number of visitors has remained light, relative to its great capacity. The natural features of Wells Gray Park are too numerous to list. There are extensive areas of rugged mountain terrain, largely unaffected and unvisited by modern man; major lakes rivers, and watersheds in a completely natural state; numerous major and minor waterfalls and cataracts; a wide variety of vegetative species; significant fish and wildlife resources; entire ecosystems, unaffected by modern society; a complex and fascinating geological history; and outstanding volcanic, glacial, and other geologic features. (Refer to Appendix 1 and to the Bibliography for more specific information.) Rugged terrain, the immensity of the park and the limited road access have ensured that Wells Gray Park remains in a substantially wilderness state.

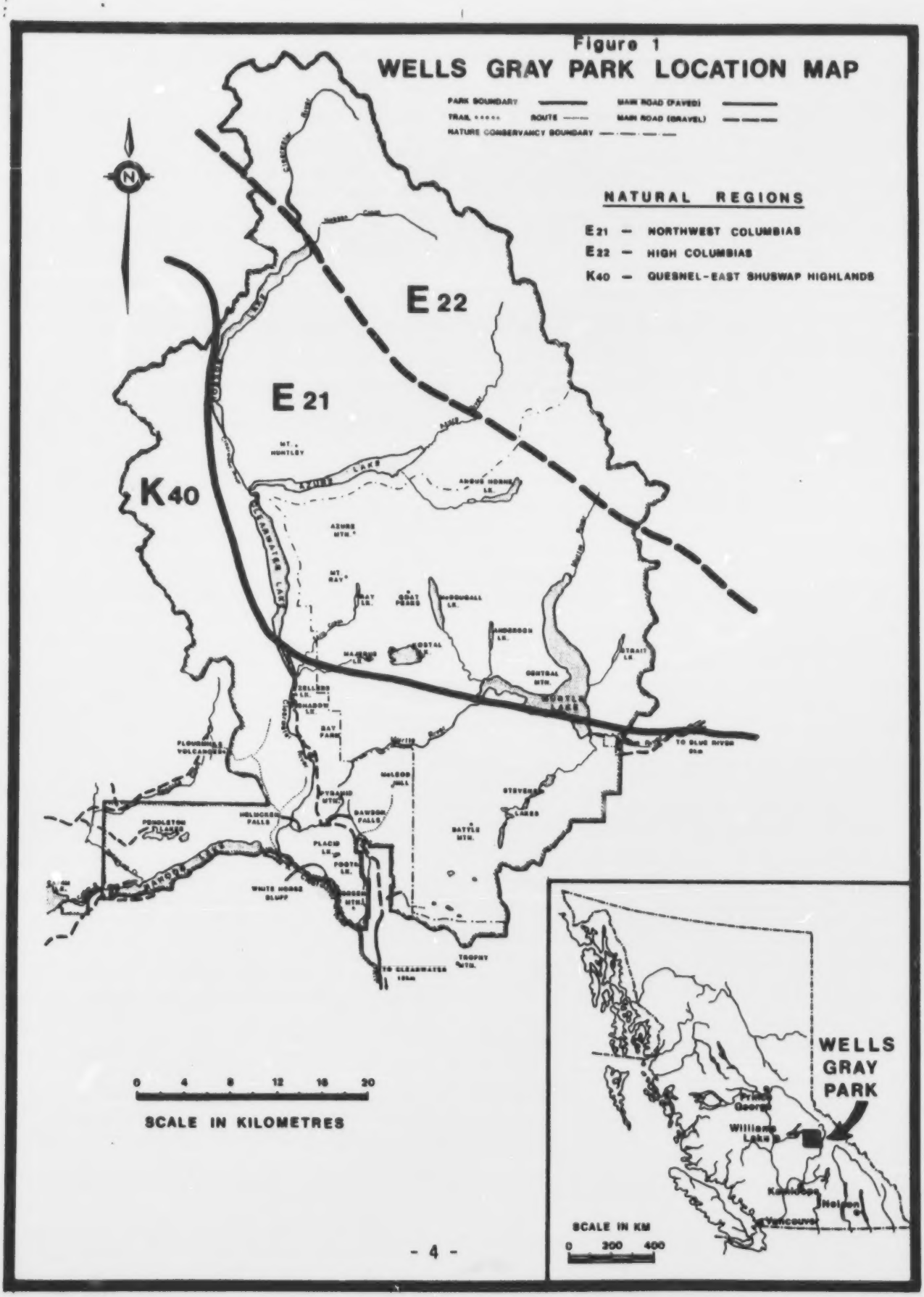
Unlike such parks as Jasper, Banff, Yoho, Glacier, Kootenay and Mt. Robson, Wells Gray Park is not bisected by a transportation corridor. By road, the park can be approached from the southwest to Mahood Lake or from the southeast to Mahood Lake or from the southeast to the park boundary near Murtle Lake and from directly south along the Clearwater River to the southern end of

Clearwater Lake, some 35 km inside the park. This southern route is by far the major access corridor.

There are other routes to Wells Gray Park, but they are only lightly used. One may travel eastward from Williams Lake to Quesnel Lake, then journey the length of this enormous lake, and finally using an abandoned mining route, cross a low elevation pass from Quesnel Lake to Hobson Lake inside the park. Alternatively, a logging road follows the Raft River from near Clearwater terminating south of the Stevens Lakes. With a float plane it is possible to land on Clearwater, Mahood, and Hobson Lakes. During the winter, helicopters take skiers to some slopes along the eastern boundary.

Figure 1

WELLS GRAY PARK LOCATION MAP



1.2 THE ROLE OF WELLS GRAY PARK

1.2.1 Regional and Provincial Context

Within the provincial park system, Wells Gray has two interdependent purposes: (1) conservation and presentation of exceptional, undisturbed natural resources; and (2) providing the public with a range of opportunities to experience and appreciate nature and a sense of wilderness.

Wells Gray is a vast area of over 5200 sq. km where the processes, cycles, and creatures of the natural world are substantially undisturbed by modern society.

It is a special area in the park system because of the variety and quality of its untamed nature. The natural features and cultural features highlight this theme. The sense of a frontier wilderness -- a realm of the unknown, where nature dominates and invites people to "discover its beauty and mystery -- pervades the many distinctive recreation environments, and dominates visitors' recreation experiences regardless of their travel modes or primary activities.

Wells Gray Park today is a destination for people who wish to experience the diminishing wilderness of our North American heritage. The area offers a unique combination of outstanding resources and opportunities for wildland experiences. Several distinct recreational environments comprise this immense park; each is dominated by untamed nature but offers varied recreation attractions and different degrees of accessibility. For instance, the Murtle Lake area is motorless, superb for canoeing and hiking, and can be reached by secondary roads; the Clearwater-Azure Lake chain offers a route of over 50 km in length to both motor boaters and canoeists wishing to venture into the heart of the park; enormous alpine areas are available throughout the park from the rolling terrain of Battle Mountain in the south, to the incredibly rugged landscape of the northern half of the park. There are many dimensions to Wells Gray Park. The magnitude and the vastness of the park can be overwhelming. The common "thread" is the theme of wilderness.

1.2.2 Conservation Role

Wells Gray makes a major contribution to both of the Division's Conservation Goals for the park system and it will be managed in a manner appropriate to guarantee the perpetuation of these values:

(a) **Wells Gray Park protects and presents excellent representation of the "High Columbias" landscape, the "Northwest Columbias" landscape, and the "Quesnel-East Shuswap Highlands" landscape.**

(b) **Wells Gray Park protects and presents an astounding array of outstanding outdoor recreation and scientific resources as well as a significant reserve of wilderness.**

The park displays a complex geological history and features rugged mountain scenery, spectacular volcanic landforms (cones, flows, tuyas, etc.), and extensive bluffs and canyons. The impressive array of hydrological resources include glaciers and icefields, major wild rivers, (with numerous falls and cataracts) major undisturbed watersheds, one of Canada's largest waterfalls (Helmcken), five very large lakes and numerous smaller waterbodies, and a very high water quality. Diverse ecosystems and floral communities of four biogeoclimatic zones (Interior Douglas Fir, Interior Cedar-Hemlock, Engelmann Spruce-Subalpine Fir, Alpine Tundra) are contained in the park. Outstanding faunal resources include southern eco-type caribou (and habitat), salmon migratory and spawning waters, excellent sport fish populations and potential new habitat, and plentiful species of birds and small mammals. Although not provincially significant, the variety of archaeological and historical features - archaeological sites, artifacts of early resource industries, recreation and homesteading - add human interest to the land.

1.2.3 Recreation Role

Wells Gray Park offers an incredible wealth of outstanding destination opportunities for outdoor recreation in association with its wilderness atmosphere and many natural and historic features. The park's location and attractions invite visitors from the immediate region as well as from across North America and the world to appreciate wilderness either directly or indirectly. The primary recreation management objective is to provide as wide a range of distinct outdoor opportunities as possible, employing different access modes, and degree of accessibility, while minimizing recreational conflicts and protecting the wilderness and environmental values of the park. In this way public access to the full range of environments represented by the park will be optimized.

Wells Gray contains four types of recreation settings (or opportunity settings), which coincide with the management zones applied to the park. These are distinguished on the basis of levels of access, development, and intensity of use (existing and potential.

The "Intensive Recreation" setting is associated with direct road access, and therefore includes all the major developments and the greatest concentrations of visitors.

The "Natural Environment" type of setting is unroaded but highly accessible from nearby roaded areas; use is somewhat dispersed but there are no formidable barriers to visitation involving means other than direct road access. Natural conditions prevail but the environment could not be considered to be wilderness.

"Semi-primitive Wilderness" settings are roadless and visitors must extend a measure of special effort to gain access. Undisturbed nature dominates and visitors should be reasonably well-prepared; however conditions are not extremely rugged and rudimentary backcountry facilities and management are provided.

"Primitive Wilderness" settings present the formidable challenges to recreation. Ground conditions are rugged. No management effort is made to provide facilities or routine patrols; maintained trails or routes do not exist. Visitors may enter or travel within such settings using only non-mechanical means.

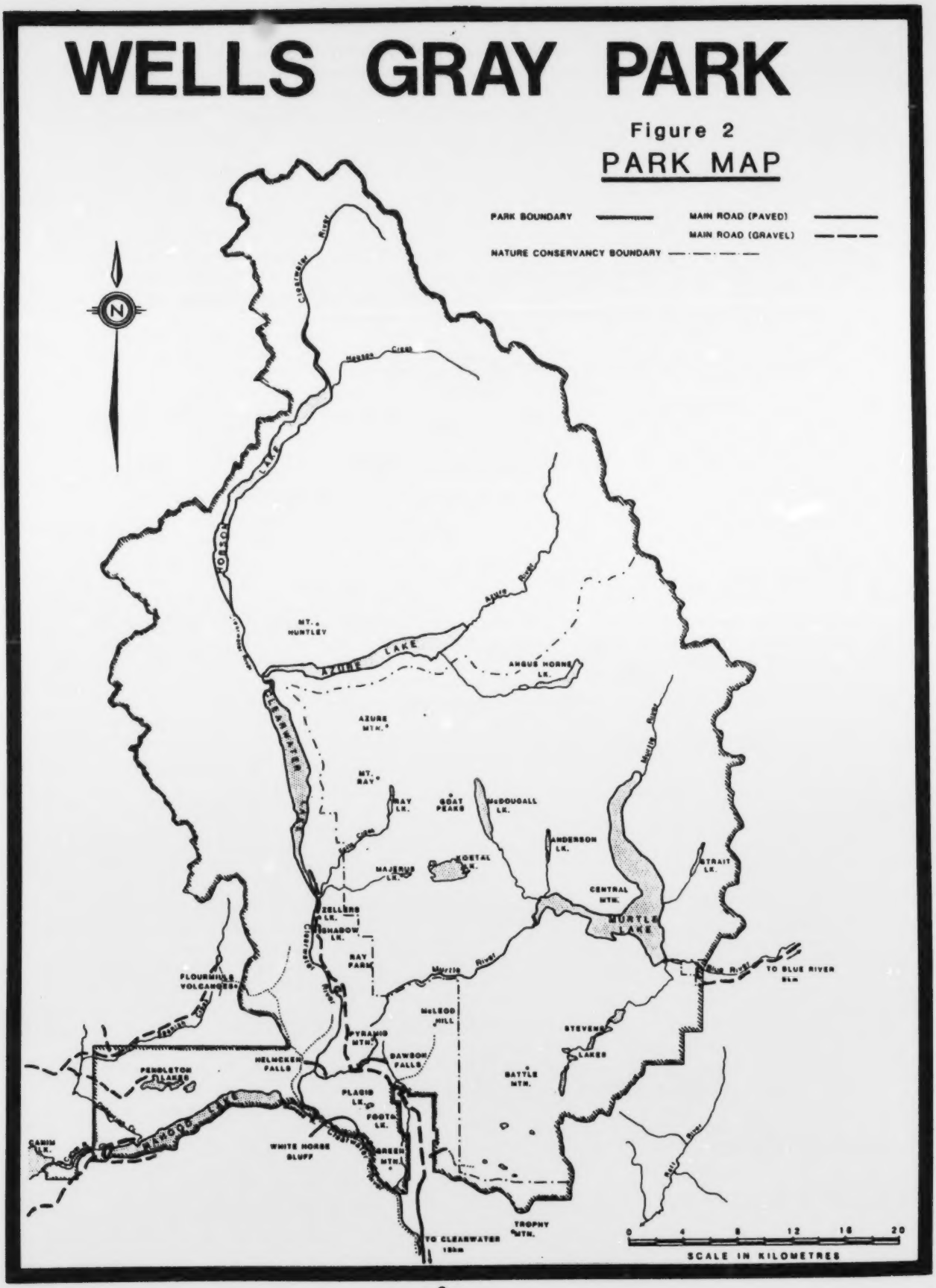
Visitor opportunities are the composites of activities, settings, and forms of access that motivate people to visit a park. Because people are differently motivated, it is difficult to describe the range of opportunities offered by a complex park such as Wells Gray. For instance, some people are motivated by the opportunity to fish in a pristine environment, and for them other activities (camping, scenery appreciation, hiking, boating, etc.) are ancillary to their main pursuit. Other people are motivated by the canoeing, boating, alpine, hunting or other opportunities, although they enjoy a variety of activities while in the park.

Thirteen such broad categories of opportunities are offered by Wells Gray Park: auto-access sightseeing and touring, auto-access destination, interpretation of natural and human history, winter recreation, wild river recreation, motorboat touring, angling, hunting, hiking, canoeing, horse-back riding, alpine appreciation, and research (a non-recreational visitor opportunity). These general opportunities, in the context of the four opportunity settings and the myriad specific recreation resources in Wells Gray Park, present a huge array of particular opportunities for many different types of people to sense and appreciate wilderness.

WELLS GRAY PARK

Figure 2

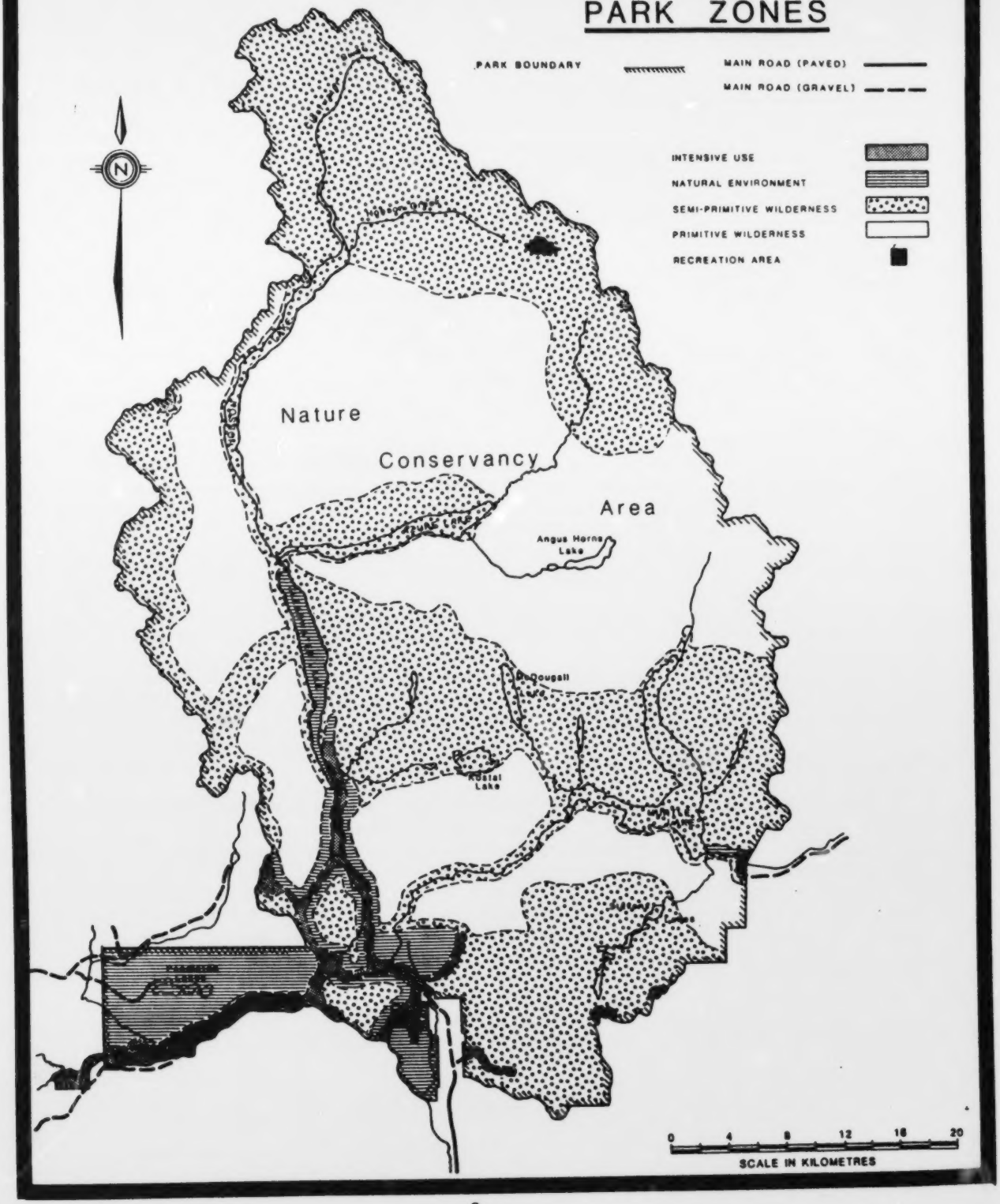
PARK MAP



WELLS GRAY PARK

Figure 3

PARK ZONES



1.3 ZONING

The complexity and size of Wells Gray constitutes a major challenge to planning and management. Zoning is a management tool applied within the park to differentiate levels of development and recreational use; zones are coincident with recreational opportunity settings.

Intensive Recreation Zones and Subzones:

These are the areas that are directly accessible by all-weather, public roads, and are the most heavily visited, developed, and managed parts of the park. Subzones are identified to give a special management emphasis where appropriate: "Development" where major facilities are concentrated; "Parkway", to emphasize scenic values along key access corridors; and "Heritage" to protect special natural or historical values from inappropriate development and use.

Natural Environment Zones:

These zones are transitional in development and visitation levels between "Intensive Recreation" and "Wilderness". Most natural environment zones absorb relatively heavy use from nearby road-access areas. Although development levels are normally fairly low key, convenient access via easily hiked trails, popular boating routes, and so on result in high popularity.

Wilderness Zones:

These are roadless areas retained in natural condition for the provision of wilderness experiences involving, by definition, large areas, unmodified by human activity and emphasizing opportunities for isolation and solitude. There are two more specific types of wilderness zone, primitive and semi-primitive. In the former, only the most rudimentary facilities may be provided where required to protect the resource base, only non-mechanized access is permitted and use levels are correspondingly light. Visitors must be experienced in, equipped for and physically capable of survival in rugged conditions. Semi-primitive wilderness zones contain facilities, which may include trails, campsites or shelters in order to offer less rigorous wilderness experiences. Permitted access methods may be more varied, (and must be specified in zone management statements) use levels and densities may be higher and on-site management may be present.

Nature Conservancy Zones:

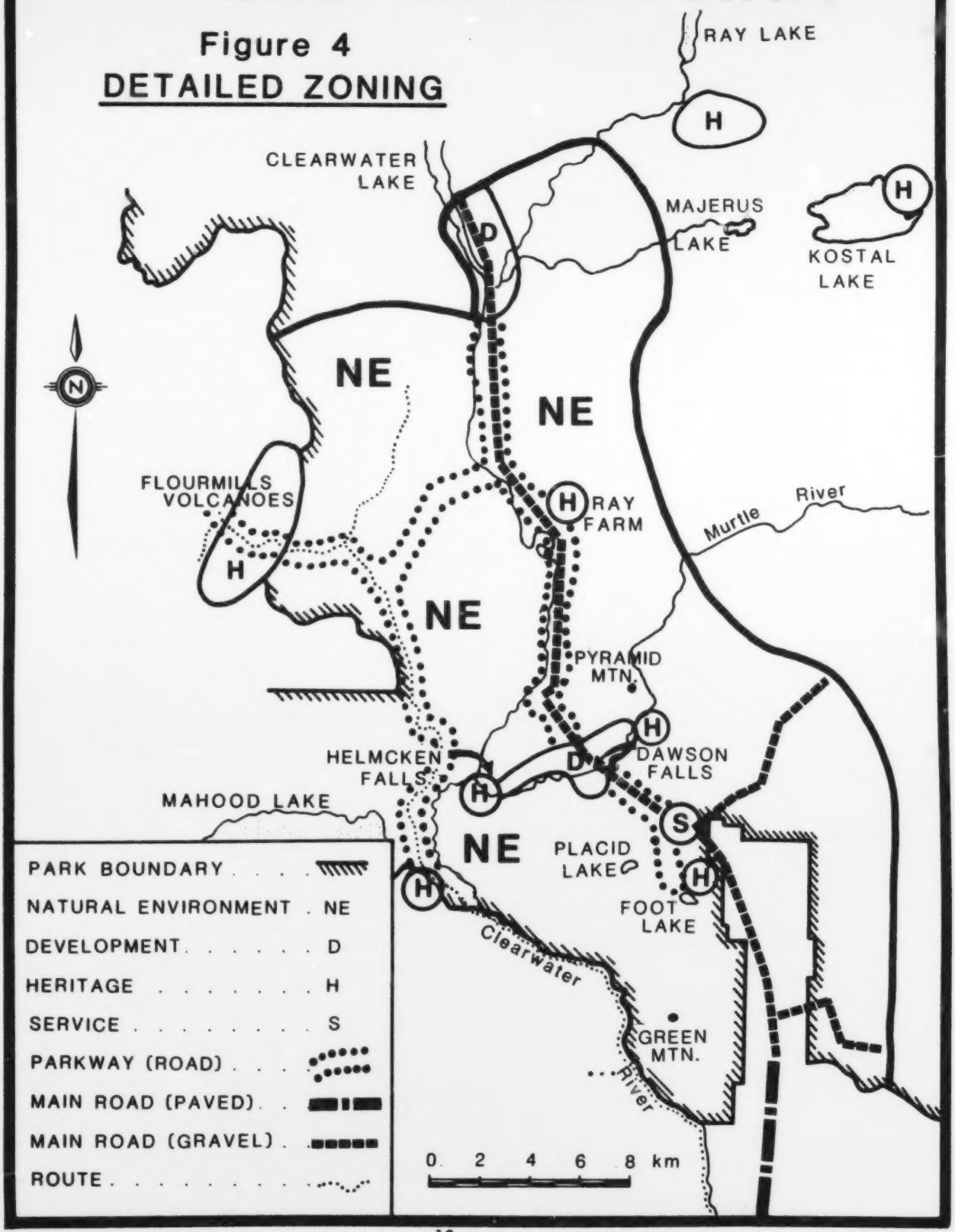
These are large, roadless areas retained in a natural condition for the preservation of their ecological environments and scenic features and designated as nature conservancies under the Park Act. While they can offer the same quality of recreational experience as primitive wilerness zones, protection of specific biological or scenic resource values takes precedence over human uses and is the basis for designation. Nature conservancies are generally subject to the same use guidelines as primitive wilderness zones, but may also have additional restrictions if required for preservation objectives.

A COMPARATIVE SUMMARY OF THE PARK ZONES

	PERCENT OF PARK AREA	ACCEPTABLE ACCESS MODE	USE LEVEL	FACILITIES
NATURE CONSERVANCY		Roadless Foot or non power boat Air access by special permit only.	Very low use Compatible with natural systems	None
PRIMITIVE WILDERNESS		Roadless Foot or non power boat Air access by special permit only.	Very low use Emphasis on solitary experiences and environmental protection.	None
SEMI PRIMITIVE WILDERNESS		Roadless Access types by area specific prescription	Low use Compatible with emphasis on solitary experiences and a wilderness atmosphere	Limited facilities by area specific prescription only; range may include trails, primitive campgrounds, toilets, shelters, simple cabins and lodges.
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT		Access usually non-mechanised buty may by area specific prescription include roads.	Moderate Compatible with experiencing a high quality natural environment.	Trails; primitive campgrounds, toilets. May include roads and parking by area specific prescription only.
INTENSIVE RECREATION		Usually by road but may involve other modes.	Moderately high Compatible with wildland recreation	Roads, vehicle parking, vehicle camping, boat launches. Park Services facilities Commercial Service facilities.

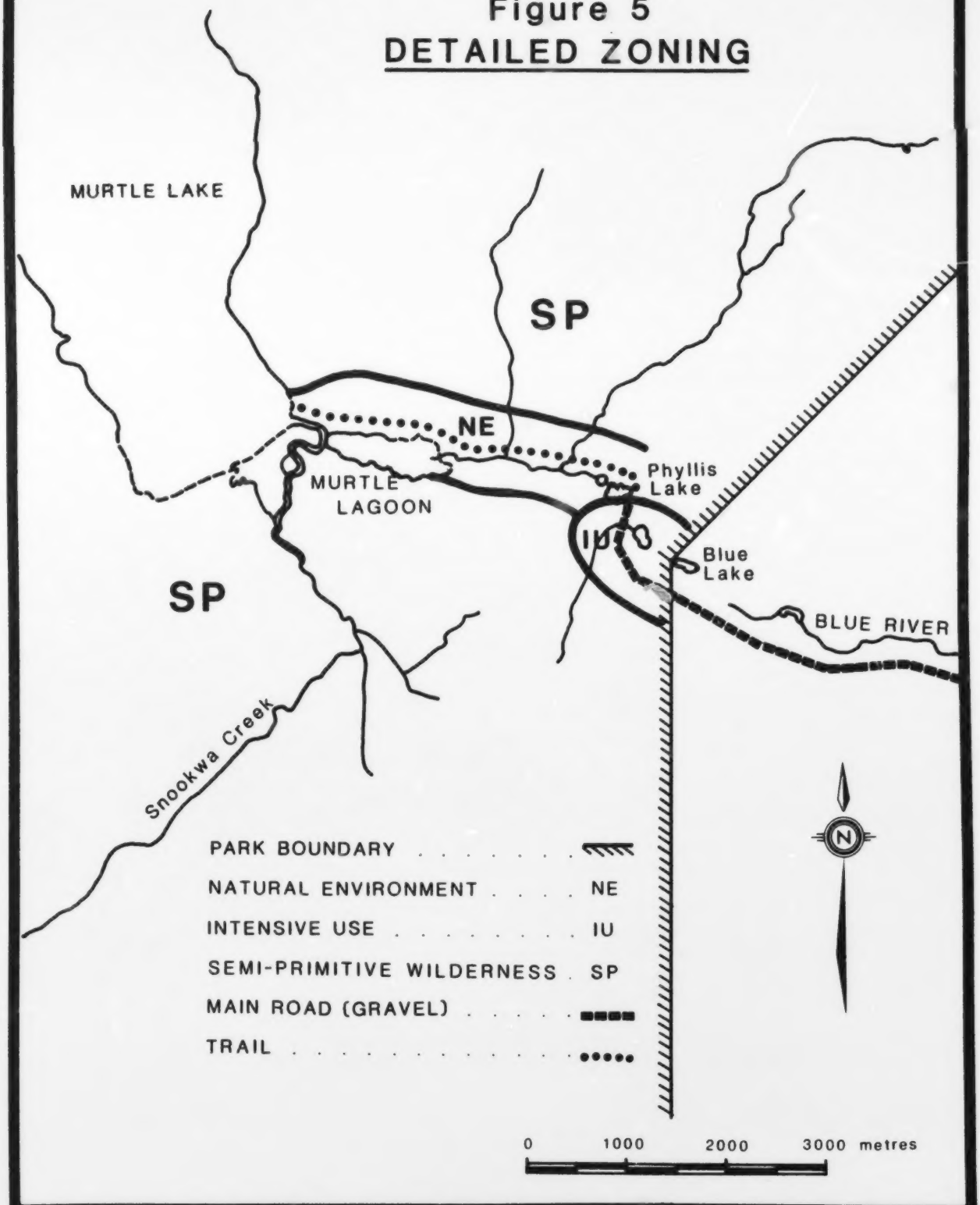
WELLS GRAY PARK

Figure 4
DETAILED ZONING



WELLS GRAY PARK

Figure 5
DETAILED ZONING



SECTION 2 - PARK MANAGEMENT

2.0 NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

The following management policies are based upon the Park Act, assocated regulations, and appropriate Ministry and Division policies. Park management policies are specific adaptations or interpretations of these broader policies regulations, and legislation, all of which apply in this park, whether or not specially noted in this plan.

2.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The natural resources of Wells Gray Park will be managed to protect and enhance high quality natural, wilderness environments representative of the three regional landscapes which the park encompasses.

In achieving this objective management will place particular emphasis on ensuring continuation of existing wildlife species diversity. Wilderness protection activity will not be allowed to threaten the management of natural resources surrounding the park or essential high use recreation areas in the park.

2.1.1 LAND AND TENURES

a) Park Boundaries:

(i) General Adequacy:

Wells Gray is a very extensive park and its boundaries are largely defined by watersheds. As such the park does an excellent job of protecting existing park resources and the regional landscapes and significant recreational features typical of this part of the province.

(ii) Possible Additions:

There are a variety of areas worthy of consideration for addition to the park. Each of these would be considered further through separate documents. Inclusion of any area in in the park may be warranted for either or both of two reasons:

1) It exhibits natural features not now present, or only poorly or partially represented in the park.

2) It affords recreation opportunities which are complementary to the park role but which cannot be obtained in the park.

a) The Flourmill Volcanic Area, situated southwest of Clearwater Lake at the headwaters of Flourmill and Spanish Creeks. The volcanic features are among the most significant in southern British Columbia and

already have a tradition of high public interest. The area exhibits elements of volcanism not presently contained or represented in Wells Gray Park. It is also an area which has been identified as one of a limited number of key recreation opportunities in the west side of the Clearwater River.

b) **The Trophy Mountain Area**, situated south of the park and east of the Clearwater River, is a popular alpine area. Its features include caribou habitat, numerous small alpine lakes, biotic and geologic features apparently not presently found in the park, excellent hiking terrain, and easy accessibility.

c) **McAndrew Lake**, a small area near the headwaters of the North Thompson River, on the northeastern periphery of the park. It is an attractive location in the only low elevation pass that offers feasible recreational access to this northern region of the park. Should the industrial road along the North Thompson River be extended, McAndrew lake would be a good staging area for recreationists venturing into this rugged part of Wells Gray.

d) **Clearwater River**, it is an important natural and historic feature as well as an excellent recreational corridor. It is desirable to study the posible addition to the park of all Crown lands along a strip of land along the Clearwater River, the Mahood River and the southeast shore of Mahood Lake.

(iii) Possible Reductions

Reduction of the area of Wells Gray Park is not necessary nor is it advocated. However, there are two areas contained by the present boundary which may not be essential to protection of the three landscapes, seem to add little to the overall value of Wells Gray Park and might be managed more effectively if they were not included within Wells Gray Park. Consideration of these will be pursued through separate document when and if desirable.

- **The Pendleton Lakes area has wildlife winter range value but, lacks significant recreational value and has been subjected to widespread forestry operations in previous decades. Its boundaries are of the "straight line" type, and therefore cross watersheds. Forest access roads cut through the area.**

- **The Mahood Lake Area, contains a mixture of park values, private landholdings and Provincial Forest. It will be necessary to evaluate fully the recreational values of the entire lake and make recommendations as to the best land designation.**

c) Inholdings and Other Tenures

Wells Gray Park is unusual in containing only a few privately held lands or land use rights. It is desirable that none of these be developed or used in a manner that would detract from or impair park values or the experiences of park visitors.

Resource extraction for commerce or industry is completely incompatible with the purposes of Wells Gray Park. Except when a pre-existing legal tenure may include a legitimate right to extract or develop, no such extraction will be permitted. This includes mining, forestry, trapping, hydro-electric development, and all other such activities.

(i) Deception Point property, Mahood Lake:

This private land on the north shore of Mahood contains good potential for public recreational development. Private recreational development would not necessarily impair park values. Acquisition is not a provincial priority.

(ii) Crown-granted and other mineral claims

See section 2.1.8 Mineral Resources

(iii) Rights-of Way:

The minor existing rights-of way for roads and utilities, will be deleted from the park. These do not cause any problems but their deletion from the park simplifies management. No additional rights-of-way will be alienated within park boundaries, unless necessary for park management purposes.

(iv) Flooding Reserve (B.C. Hydro and Power Authority):

While the legal status of the reservoir flooding reserve over Hobson Lake, Clearwater Lake, Azure Lake, Hemp Creek, and the Clearwater River remains uncertain, it is a high priority to have this reserve officially cancelled.

(v) Traplines:

Existing traplines will be phased out consistent with Division policy.

(vi) Trespasses:

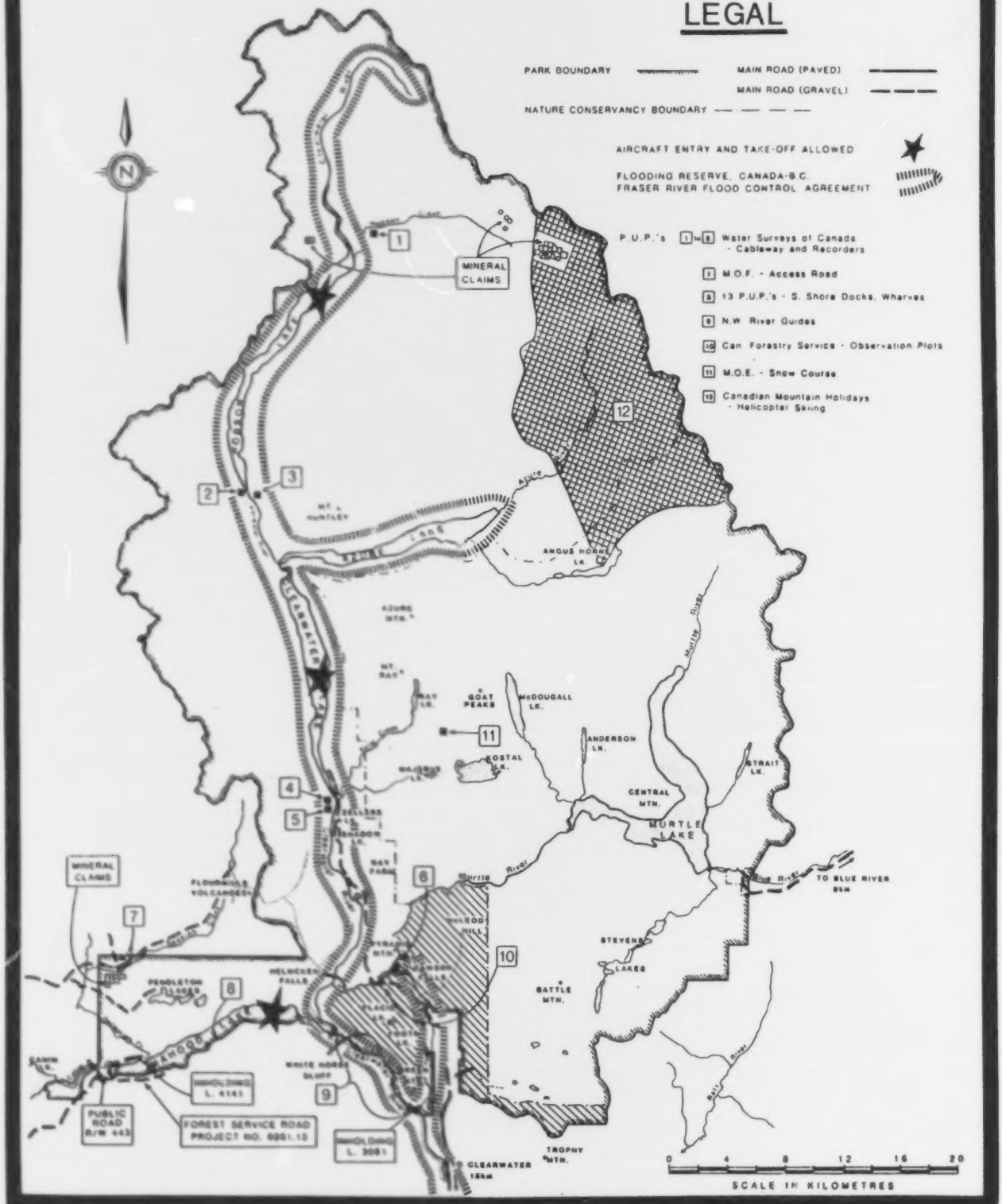
Trespasses and other illegal uses of park resources will be identified and appropriate actions will be taken to eliminate or legitimize such activities.

(vii) Guide Territories:

Guide territories in this park have been phased out over the recent time. No new tenures will be issued for hunting guides.

WELLS GRAY PARK

Figure 6



2.1.2 Water

a) General:

One of the major assets of Wells Gray Park - one which gives the park international significance and enhances the quality of many other park resources - is the conservation of an enormous, undisturbed watershed area. For aesthetic, ecological, and health considerations it is important that the high quality of rivers, streams, and lakes within the park be maintained. It is essential that park facilities are not of a scale, size, or design that could impair surface or ground water quality.

b) Impoundment, Diversion, and other Water control Measures:

It is entirely incompatible with park values and the Park Act to impound, divert or otherwise utilize the water resources of Wells Gray Park for hydro-electric generation, downstream flood control, or any other similar purpose.

2.1.3 Vegetation

a) General Objective:

The vegetation of the park will be managed to protect wilderness values and, more particularly: to enhance visual values; ensure continuation of viable wildlife habitat; and protect any special flora or plant associations which may occur in the park.

The wild, natural state of the vegetation of Wells Gray Park is an important park attribute. In general, the park will be managed with sensitivity to protecting and/or restoring this condition, while providing for recreation and managing the other valued park resources.

It is important to monitor and manage for long term forest health. **A long-term forest management strategy will be developed.** This will include an inventory of the resource, and will consider the utilization and management of fire, the habitat needs of wildlife, the presence and control of forest disease, special flora, gene pool factors, reforestation, relationships to adjacent commercial forest areas, and the expectations of park visitors. Co-operation and consultation with other key government agencies are implicit in the Division's responsibilities and forest management capabilities.

b) Specific Current Policies:

(i) Fire and Disease

Fire and disease are recognized as natural and valuable forces in the wilderness ecosystems of Wells Gray Park. In some instances, wildfire and disease can threaten important recreation values and facilities as well as the commercial forest values of adjacent lands.

Fire and disease will be suppressed where warranted in all forest stands affording significant wildlife habitat, and when in the vicinity of park facilities, high use areas, and adjacent populated or commercial forest areas. Natural means are favoured in the control of disease.

Chemical spraying will not be employed in a manner or of a kind that could affect wildlife, potable water supplies, park visitors, or water quality in general. The Division will be governed by the Pesticide Control Act in such matters.

Fire is an acceptable management tool with regard to management and improvement of certain wildlife habitat (moose, in particular) and long-term forest health. Non-suppression of wild fire and prescribed fire techniques will be addressed in the "fire management" component of the forest management strategy.

Forest cover manipulation (employing prescribed fire) to maintain winter range essential to the parks moose population is important in the general area of the south-central part of the park roughly bounded by the Clearwater River, the lower west slopes of Battle Mountain area, Kilpill Mountain, and Lone Spoon Creek. Such manipulation will be further detailed in the forest management component.

(ii) Commercial Forest Utilization:

Exploitation of the forest for commercial values is contrary to park objectives and the Park Act and as such will not be permitted except as the by-product of park and recreation management (eg. facility development). Cone harvesting will be permitted on a limtied scale, insofar as it does not impair park values or visitor experiences, in recognition of the gene pool value of Wells Gray Park to society.

2.1.4 Wildlife

a) General Objective

Management to maintain the present range of wildlife species in numbers consistent with natural population cycles will have a high priority in Wells Gray Park.

However, whenever wildlife numbers of a species recognized as threatened or uncommon are in significant declines, special management to protect and or restore those populations may be undertaken. Wells Gray Park contains a range of wildlife species species representative of the landscape types the park contains. These animals provide a wide range of recreational opportunites and are integral to the atmosphere park visitors anticipate when visiting a wilderness area.

The park will be managed to (a) protect critical wildlife habitat (b) maintain existing species diversity (c) present opportunities for viewing, study and hunting. Whenever these objectives conflict management will minimize conflict through zoning of user activity to separate uses in both time and space. Conflicts involving threatened or uncommon species will be resolved in favour of that species.

The management of park wildlife will be based upon sound, recognized wildlife management principles. This will require constant monitoring of populations, study of specific problems and cooperation and consultation with other ministries, educational institutions, knowledgeable organizations and individuals. A wildlife management plan will be produced.

b) Current Specific Policies

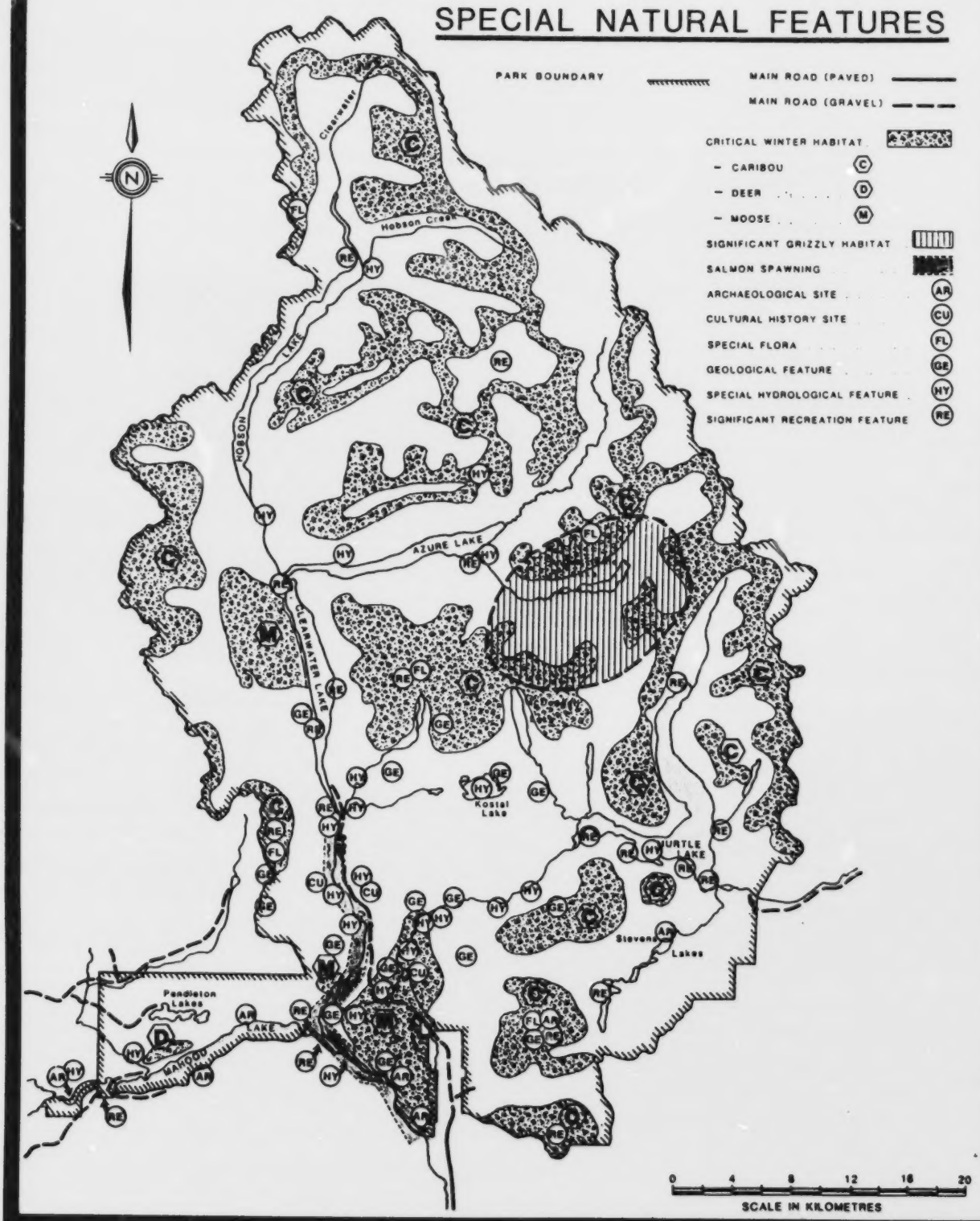
(i) Recognizing Wells Gray Park as a large reservoir of wildland, able to independently sustain viable populations of animals, the park will provide sanctuary for uncommon species native to the park. Caribou, wolves and grizzly bear are known examples of uncommon species. The preservation of the habitat and the maintenance of their numbers will receive high priority. Other animals species, particularly moose, goat and deer will be maintained at levels consistent with the natural carrying capacity of the park irrespective of demand for these animals in other areas.

(ii) As a general principle, it is desirable to maintain the present complement of species within the park without introducing non-native species. Wildlife habitat characteristics necessary to ensure continuation of traditional species complements and populations will be maintained to the extent practical.

WELLS GRAY PARK

Figure 7

SPECIAL NATURAL FEATURES



(iii) Predator control measures are not socially acceptable nor deemed necessary except when required to protect an endangered population.

(iv) Park developments will be situated and designed such that there are no significant, identifiable impacts to wildlife or critical habitats.

(v) Trapping of fur bearing animals is not compatible with the wildlife management philosophy and existing traplines will be phased out.

(vi) Projects designed to maintain present habitats (which are changing through vegetative succession over time and not being replaced because of wildfire suppression) may be undertaken. Those areas presently identified are to be described in the wildlife management plan.

(vii) Whenever recreational harvest of wildlife is appropriate, the conflict between consumptive and non-consumptive uses will be minimized. A system of zones may be established which separate in time and or space, those conflicting uses. The object in the creation of those zones will be to provide easily observable animals (particularly moose) at specific locations and times of the year.

(viii) The capture of individual animals from populations able to withstand harvesting may be considered for purposes of reintroduction to areas outside the park if suitable stocks are not reasonably available from other sources.

(ix) Where commercial forest or other land use operations may affect wildlife that migrates in and out of the park, dialogue will be established with the appropriate agencies to reach agreement on how to minimize this impact. Of specific concern at this time are areas above 5500 ft. on Trophy Mtn. and the Raft River drainage, as well as the mature forest in the upper Blue River area, where caribou habitat is affected.

2.1.5 Fish

a) General Objective

(i) A high quality natural fish population is an integral element of Wells Gray Park. The park is important to fish resources provincially, due to the extensive, high quality watershed and numerous waterbodies conserved within its boundaries. There are significant populations of trout and a significant salmon migration.

While there are no known unique fish populations in Wells Gray, the park serves an invaluable conservation role in regard to natural ("wild") stocks and their undisturbed habitats and will be managed to protect these values.

(ii) A fishery management strategy is a high priority. It will incorporate research, inventory, conservation, enhancement, and recreational utilization. Cooperation and consultation with other key government agencies is implicit in sound management. This strategy should be broadly formulated as soon as possible.

b) Specific Current Policies

(i) The natural (native) species complement, including sport and non-sport species, will be maintained.

(ii) Species not presently found in the park will not be introduced into the waters where they could affect native species. New habitat will be populated only with species native to British Columbia and the Fraser River system.

(iii) Park developments will not impair fish habitat.

(iv) Fishery enhancement is acceptable and compatible in principle.

(v) Salmonid Enhancement projects are, in principle, acceptable along the Clearwater River below Clearwater Lake, subject to Division agreement on specific project conditions.

(vi) No population control measures, such as poisoning, are appropriate at this time.

(vii) Angling is an appropriate use of the resource, subject to regulations. The resource will be managed to provide three levels of angling experience: intensive angling where easily accessible by road; dispersed angling where accessible by short trail, power boat, or aircraft; and wilderness angling. The subject of angling is further treated in the Visitor Services section of this plan.

2.1.6 Cultural Heritage

a) General Objectives

Park heritage features will be inventoried and evaluated and appropriate management procedures will be implemented. Interpretation programs will be mounted where applicable and where there is no conflict with the resource.

Wells Gray Park contains a variety of interesting cultural resources. In the main, they have value in relation to park visitors experiencing the wilderness flavour. Decaying farm buildings, neglected farm clearings, the presence of archaeological sites, and the scattered evidence of previous enterprises (logging mining, etc.) give people a clear message that here nature dominates and mankind is but a visitor.

b) Current Specific Policies

(i) Current archaeological data is dated and will be updated, especially where any development is planned. All archaeological sites are protected by the Heritage Conservation Act. These sites will be protected as required to preserve their integrity. Resource management guidelines or practices will involve consultation with the Heritage Conservation Branch.

(ii) Heritage resources will be assessed for their interpretative and recreational value and managed appropriately.

(iii) Movable artifacts of early settlement, industrial, or recreational use may be relocated to a site or sites more accessible to park visitors and conducive to interpretation.

(iv) The Ray Farm and the Majerus Farm will be presented to the public as symbolic of frontier pioneering lifestyles. The Majerus Farm will be allowed to follow the natural process of deterioration. The Ray Farm buildings will be documented to aid interpretation and permit future restoration or replication if desired. The clearing for the Ray Farm will be maintained in a meadow-like state to enable visitors to appreciate the historic use of the area and to observe wildlife. To aid historical interpretation, photo-monitoring will be instituted to document the condition of the clearing and the deterioration of the farm buildings over time.

2.1.7 Visual Resources

a) General Objectives

Many of the resources that contribute to Wells Gray Park's fame have strong visual components. Suitable presentation of the array of resources is a challenge. Another challenge is protection of visual quality. The quality of the visual resource can too easily suffer when it is not recognized in advance of development. In general therefore two principles will guide management sensitivity to visual resources:

(i) Wherever possible visitors will be presented with a variety of focal vistas and panoramic views of the natural environment of Wells Gray Park.

(ii) **Whenever new development is proposed, care will be taken to locate and design this development (roads, campgrounds, etc.) in an unobtrusive manner.**

b) Current Specific Policies

(i) The Clearwater corridor between the park entrance and Clearwater Lake will be studied to determine practical ways of enhancing the visual variety along the route.

(ii) Dialogue will be established with the Ministry of Forests in an attempt to reduce the visual impact of forestry in the following areas adjacent to the park's boundaries:

- areas visible from Murtle Lake
- Blue River, east of park
- upper Raft River
- west of Flourmill proposed addition
- south of Mahood Lake and River
- west side of Clearwater River
- west slopes of Trophy Mountain area

(iii) The park lacks significant high elevation viewpoints. Developed viewpoints are appropriate at Green Mountain (Auto-access) and a suitable ridge in the vicinity of Ray Lake - Goat Peaks (trail access).

(iv) The Ray Farm will be maintained as a clearing with abandoned, naturally deteriorating farm buildings.

2.1.8 Mineral Resources

a) General Objectives

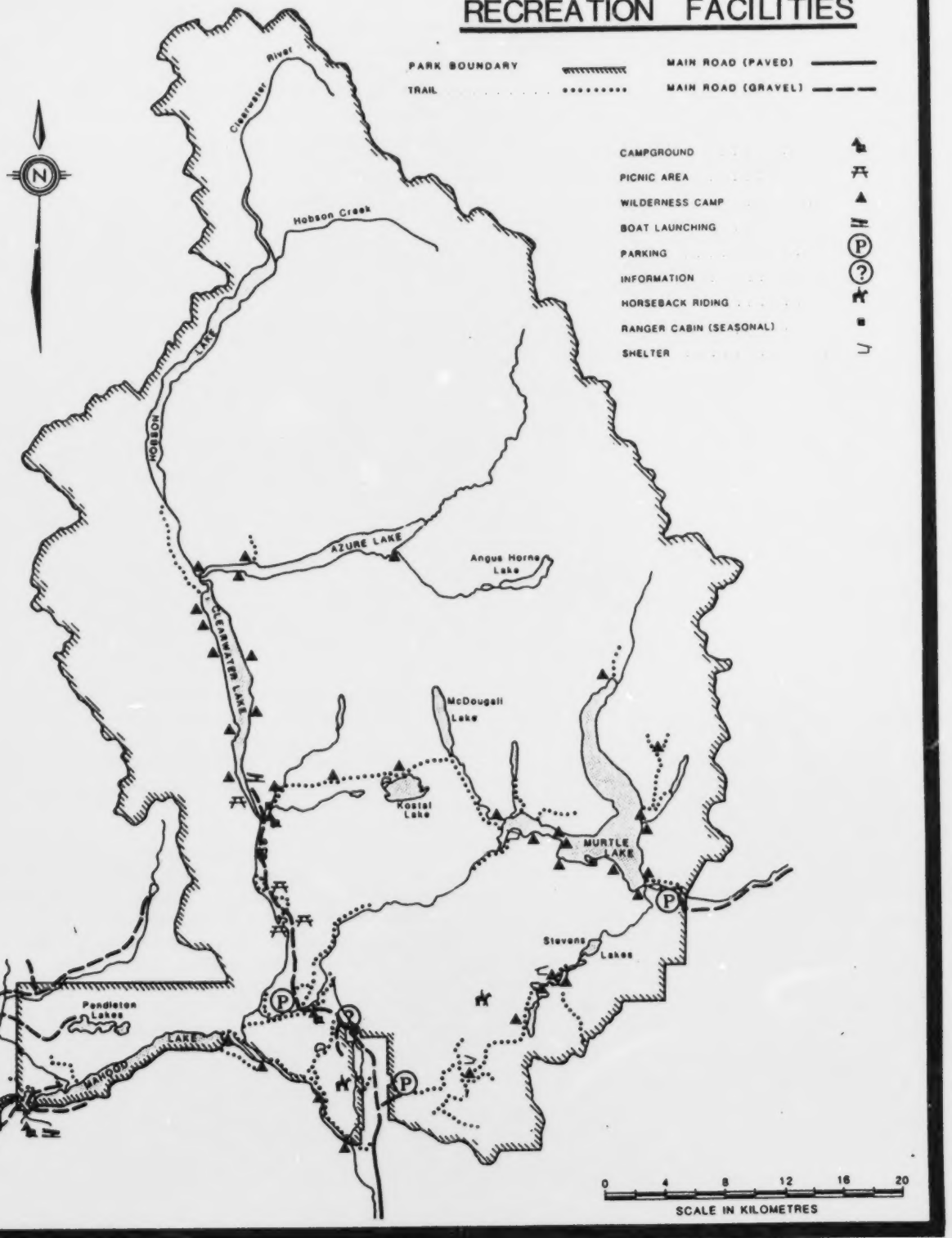
Mineral extraction is incompatible with the purposes of Wells Gray Park and contrary to the Park Act in Class "A" Parks. However, a limited number of tenures either pre-exist the designation of a park or were granted before Class "A" status was established in 1973. The Supreme Court of Canada has obliged the government to permit the holders to follow normal resource exploration and extraction practice and procedure, or to compensate the tenure holder.

No new mineral claims can be staked or otherwise acquired in the park. Existing tenure holders will be offered an opportunity to surrender their claims by a negotiated settlement. If an equitable settlement, cannot be reached, only then will the claim areas be reclassified to Recreation Area and the owners given an opportunity to proceed with exploration. All existing Exploration Guidelines and Mine Review procedures established by the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, will be followed. No activity can occur before a Resource Use Permit has been issued by the Parks Division.

WELLS GRAY PARK

Figure 8

RECREATION FACILITIES



2.2 VISITOR SERVICES OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

2.2.1 Introduction

a) General Concept

The overall objective of park management will be to provide for a broad range of public access to various types of wilderness opportunity. These will include large areas in the park which will be set aside as complete wildernesses where no facilities or access improvements will be provided. At the other range of the spectrum will be areas which will then serve as relatively intensive destination foci where visitors will be able to enjoy recreation services in a wild and remote setting. Between these two extremes lie large and varied areas of more or less remote access where the limitations on various activities and access will be found.

Wells Gray Park offers an unrivaled array of outdoor recreation opportunities. Whether directly or indirectly these all centre upon the theme of "wilderness". In protecting a vast area of largely undisturbed nature, Wells Gray has both real and symbolic value in offering people opportunities to appreciate wilderness. For the purpose of this plan, wilderness is not considered as a physical resoure but rather as a perception of the dominance of nature and natural processes. Of course, this perception is applied to real places. People vary widely in their desire to experience absolute wilderness - but Wells Gray Park offers a considerable range of degrees of wilderness experience. Along the road corridor, visitors perceive that wilderness lies just beyond their campsite; alternatively visitors may venture further into the park by foot, horse, boat, canoe, or aircraft to experience closer contact with undisturbed nature. Wilderness is an important symbol and resource in modern North American society and Wells Gray gives people the substance to appreciate it in the context of a variety of recreational pursuits.

b) Access Strategy

The strategy is to increase the general level of year round accessibility and variety of forms of access in a few selected parts of the park, while preserving the wilderness atmosphere and avoiding incompatible recreational uses. The size and diversity of Wells Gray constitute an opportunity to provide a wide range of recreational experiences. The modes of travel - whether by road, snowmobile, ski, air, horse, foot, canoe, or motorboat - are strongly linked to visitors' recreational experiences.

Wells Gray Park has had a history of relatively low recreational use, primarily due to lack of access. Unfortunately the present accesses do not bring visitors close to even a very few of the park's most outstanding recreational alpine assets. The park's vastness has meant that a visitor is required to commit major effort and time into the task of reaching any of the key destinations. As a result the importance of the park is not well understood.

2.2.2 Visitor Opportunities

a) Auto-access Sightseeing and Touring

It will be the objective to attract increased number of sightseeing visits and to encourage users to stay longer in the park by increasing the number of opportunities at particular locations, implementing visual management guidelines in the main corridor and improvind the quality of opportunities provided at the various facilities.

This is a popular frontcountry program, closely linked with the auto access destination. The focal area is and will continue to be the Clearwater access route with Helmcken Falls/Murtle River being the major destination. A bridge across the Clearwater would offer a circle trip - past the Flourmill Volcano and then westward to 100 Mile House and the Cariboo. Viewing of the Canim River and Falls is the chief attraction at the Mahood Lake access.

At present sightseeing opportunities are limited because of road conditions, insufficient attractive viewpoints and insufficient services (information, interpretation, short trails, etc.) at destination points.

Priority - Provision of new opportunities associated with this program will be among the highest priorities in the short-term future. Emphasis will be given to actions which will make improvements to existing opportunities where there are present impediments to their effectiveness.

b) Auto-access Destination

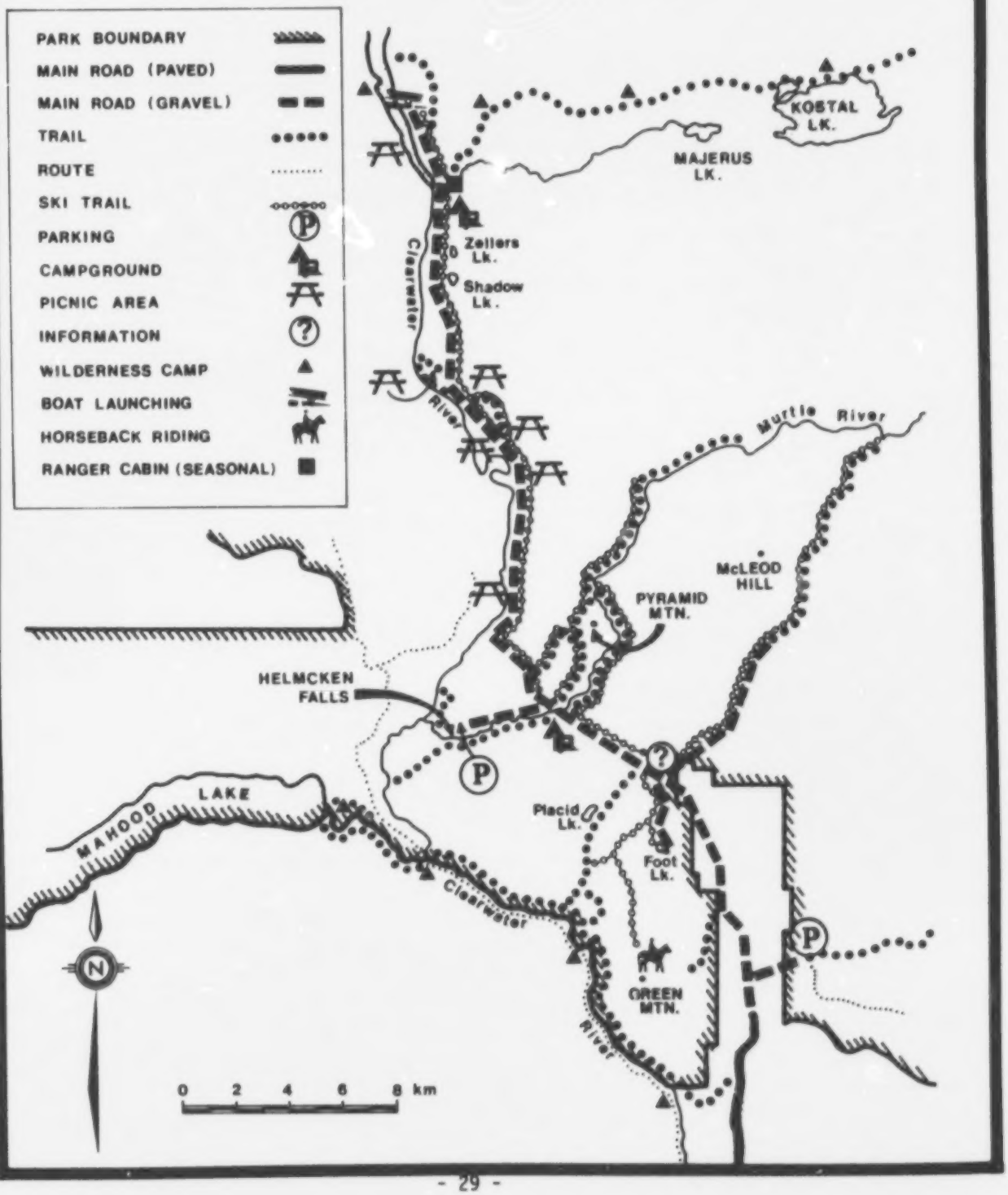
It will be the objective to increase use by the development and enlargement of a select number of destination areas with associated accommodation facilities as demand warrants, and as new road termini are established.

This frontcountry program will continue to be most concentrated in the Clearwater corridor. A bridge over the Clearwater River, offers some potential but there is a shortage of water bodies to locate a destination development nearby. At Mahood Lake additional opportunities, depending upon demand, are available at Deception Point (now private) and at Canim Lake.

WELLS GRAY PARK

Figure 9

DETAIL OF RECREATION FACILITIES



Priorities - At present use is limited by: lack of opportunities at existing destinations; poor campground location to serve the southern section of the park access corridor; lack of information.

This will be the highest priority program for Visitor Services in the Clearwater Corridor with emphasis given to removing impediments to use of existing opportunities.

c) Visitor Information Programs

It will be the objective to improve visitor enjoyment and extend the length of stay by providing information strategically located to attract visitors into the park and to inform them about the park opportunities once they are there.

This frontcountry program is best delivered in association with the principle nodes for "sightseeing and touring" and "destination" use. In addition to improving the quality of presentation at existing nodes, and establishing the program at new nodes as they are developed, it is critical that information stations be established at all park entrances. A strategy is required to provide enhanced information services at the intersection of Highway 5 at the park access road for the Clearwater Corridor. Information should be provided along that road and at a new Visitor Centre close to the park boundary. A combination of both personalized and self-guided techniques will be used at selected popular sites in the park. Major themes will be:

- conservation values of the park
- geology, highlighting volcanism
- archaeological history
- rivers and erosion
- history of modern society's use of the area
- natural history (flora, fauna)
- conservation values of the park
- recreation opportunities of the park

Priority - This will be part of the highest priority program for the park.

d) Winter Recreation

It will be the objective to offer a wide diversity of dispersed winter recreation opportunities in both front-country and backcountry settings.

The southern part of the park will be the focus of winter activities. The Clearwater road will be kept open at least as far as Helmcken Falls, when feasible. Cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and Nordic skiing will be encouraged. In the Battle Mountain area there is potential for ski touring; such extended trips would be encouraged by the availability of prescribed helicopter or snowmobile access. In northern areas of Wells Gray, helicopter-access skiing will be encouraged by prescription in Semi-primitive Widlerness Zones.

Priority - At present use is limited by public uncertainty over the winter driving conditions on the road and the availability of services in and close to the park.

e) Wild River Recreation

It will be the objective to provide access and opportunities for visitor use of the high quality Clearwater River for water-based activities associated with fishing, hiking and nature study.

Despite the numerous wild rivers in Wells Gray, the Clearwater is the only one offering significant boating opportunities. Between Clearwater and Azure Lakes, the river presents an excellent, reasonably safe power boating opportunity to enjoy the thrill of travel on an uncontrolled river. The river offers pleasant non-powered floating in the vicinity of the Horseshoe but downstream hazards prevent lengthy trips. Further down river, commencing near the confluence with the Mahood River, rafting trips are offered.

Integrating the various often incompatible, recreation demands now focusing on the Clearwater River will be among the most complex tasks in implementing this plan.

Priority - The river is a key natural feature of the park and there is potential for greatly increased utilization of this natural resource for a range of visitor activities.

f) Motorboat Touring

It will be the objective to encourage increased access to selected remote lake destinations by providing suitable access to the lakes for motorized craft and associated facilities at key destination points around the lake.

Frontcountry motorboating opportunities exist on Clearwater Lake and Mahood Lake. More remote motor boating opportunities are offered on Azure Lake and, potentially, Hobson Lake although the access here is extremely difficult. Boat launches are available on the accessible lakes. There are rental facilities on Mahood Lake. On Clearwater Lake it is intended to offer both rental and water taxi services. Destinations on Clearwater and Azure Lakes are insufficiently developed at the present time. Motorboat touring will not be permitted on any other park lakes (Murtle, Kostal, Stevens, etc.).

Priority - This is an important program in the park and supplements the destination appeal of the area.

g) Angling

It will be the objective to protect the resource and to provide a range of high quality, angling opportunities in association with other recreational pursuits and a variety of forms of access.

The park offers three levels of angling experience: intensive (directly accessible by road), dispersed (short trail, power boat or aircraft), and wilderness. Improvement of access and guiding of anglers is generally acceptable, except where the natural resource and the range of quality recreational experiences may be significantly impinged upon.

Priority - Fishing has been one of the historic attractions of Wells Gray and retention of a quality fishery will be a high priority in the park. Provision of new fishing opportunities, where feasible will also be undertaken.

h) Hunting

Hunting is currently occurring in all areas of the park except the primitive wilderness (Nature Conservancy). The most significant opportunities exist in the vicinity of the Clearwater road, the vicinity of Clearwater and Azure Lakes and west of the Clearwater. The principal species are deer, back bear, and moose.

i) Hiking

It will be the objective to encourage both single day and extended hiking trips as a means of landscape and feature appreciation and access to wilderness and as a means of enjoying that wilderness opportunity in the Park.

Hiking opportunities are available in all parts of the park. In frontcountry areas, hiking trails are normally of a single day length, are oriented to specific features, and will be maintained at a type II or III level. In all backcountry areas, except the "primitive" zones, hiking is encouraged through a mix of type IV trails and marked routes. In "primitive" zones, hikers are encouraged to discover their own routes.

There are major limitations to present hiking opportunities in the park largely because many trails are not well designed and do not access some of the most interesting park features. Most trails are long and there is a lack of both short and medium length circle routes.

Priority - Provision and maintenance of improved hiking opportunities is an important adjunct to the high priority destination areas and is key to improving access to important natural features and wilderness opportunities.

j) Canoeing

It will be the objective to protect in Wells Gray a range of significant wilderness lake canoeing and kayaking areas and to facilitate such use in the park.

While opportunities for canoeing exist on the Clearwater River, Clearwater Lake, Azure Lake, Mahood Lake, Hobson Lake, and a variety of small and mid-sized water bodies throughout the park, all are of relatively low significance in comparison to Murtle Lake. Murtle Lake will remain free of recreational motor boats. Canoeing will be facilitated through minor improvement of the existing trail access to Murtle Lagoon, guiding, provision of emergency shelters, improvement of hiking opportunities, and other measures. Commercial rental of canoes at the parking lot appropriate. Optimum use levels will be determined and in the future regulations may be required to limit use or party sizes.

Priority - Murtle Lake is one of the key features of Wells Gray Park. Its protection as a wilderness but with increased recreation use will be of the highest priority for the park services. Other lakes provide for a range of canoeing opportunities and on the rivers, select sections provide some canoeing and kayaking potential.

k) Horseback Riding

It will be the objective to encourage travel by horseback where appropriate in consideration of terrain and other recreationists.

Frontcountry opportunities will be limited principally to designated routes. In the backcountry, horseback riding is appropriate but routes will be subject to closure if judged to be too sensitive to impact or if damaged by overuse. A livery service is not appropriate or necessary within the park, although the guiding of horseback trips is acceptable.

Limitations:

- terrain in some areas
- mudding
- access/and level trails

Priorities - Provision of horseback opportunities in selected areas will be an essential part of the overall priority to enhance destination opportunities.

l) Alpine Appreciation

It will be the objective to encourage the appreciation of the many distinct, outstanding alpine areas of Wells Gray Park, employing a variety of access means.

Most areas of Wells Gray contain highly scenic alpine country. However, this opportunity can only be enjoyed at present as either a scenic vista or after considerable physical effort of the park hikers. It is intended to provide one easy access destination which will be a trail head for alpine use.

Priority - Provision of a new access into the alpine is an essential part of improving the destination opportunities within Wells Gray Park. Provision of a range of alpine access opportunities is also a priority within this park.

m) Research

It will be the objective to encourage the pursuit of scholarly research regarding geology, biology, botany, hydrology, archaeology, and other such scientific fields pertinent to the resources of Wells Gray Park.

Throughout the park are resources of considerable interest to the various sciences. The park contains large areas that have barely been explored and these present intriguing challenges to researchers. The location of the park relative to transportation routes makes it reasonably accessible.
While it is unlikely that in numbers researchers will ever comprise a significant percentage of park visitation, they are responsible for generating information that raises the international reputation of the park which, in turn, stimulates visitation. Ideally, the park would contain some sort of basic facility to accommodate researchers during their extended stays. Without incurring the direct costs, the Division may provide a suitable site (or a presently unused building) - possibly associated with the main service area - and encourage British Columbia universities to establish such a facility.

2.2.3. Private Sector Role

a) General Principle

It is expected that the private sector will be an important element in achieving many of the visitor program objectives for the park. This will be achieved within the primary park management objective which is to ensure that Wells Gray Park is conserved in its present natural state for posterity and presented for public enjoyment as a widely diversified wilderness. The private sector will be invited to participate in the provision of a range of visitor opportunities associated with the key objectives of providing for increased destination opportunities along the Clearwater Corridor, in the lakes of that corridor and in the diverse alpine environments. It is recognized that the park and the community of Clearwater together function as an important tourist destination area.

b) Recreational Guiding and Charter Services

Such services are fully compatible with Wells Gray Park, provided they operate within carefully defined Park Use Permits. The number of permits issued may be restricted. Services will involve helicopters, fixed wing aircraft, horses, motorboats, canoes, snowmobiles, and other transport modes in accordance with policies identified in this Master Plan or otherwise created by the Division or by Government.
Current specific policies are as follows:

i) Guiding of anglers is acceptable throughout the park except where angling pressures force closures or special management practices.

ii) Motorboat touring and taxiing is acceptable on Clearwater, Azure, Hobson, and Mahood Lakes, although the number of permits may be limited.

iii) Guiding for hiking and related trail use is acceptable throughout the park.

iv) Commercial helicopter and fixed wing access is only possible wherever the park zoning indicates that mechanized access is anticipated.

v) Under permit, seasonal camps or caches (eg. hay) without permanent structures may be located anywhere outside primitive wilderness.

vi) Touring, guiding, and water taxiing is acceptable in the park (by specific prescription in the Semi-primitive Zone).

c) Rentals

A rental concession offering small power boats and canoes is desirable at Clearwater Lake, owing to the considerable distance from the park boundary. Similar services relative to Murtle Lake (canoe only) and Mahood Lake are also appropriate.

d) Livery

Use levels and the location of current horseback riding areas do not warrant the existence of livery services with park boundaries at the present time. In future, it is appropriate that such a service be provided west of Clearwater River provided road access over the Clearwater River has been established.

e) Lodging

Fixed accommodation may be categorized into two classes:

i. Intensive - auto access - No areas have been identified where such use would be acceptable. In addition it is necessary to consider the existence of already established facilities outside the park. The question of the economic viability of accommodation in the park has yet to be considered.

ii. Backcountry - In selected natural environment areas or by prescription in certain Semi-primitive Wilderness Zones, a system of huts or small lodges may be desirable and viable. These would probably complement existing commercial tourist enterprises and might be the only way to access certain park recreational opportunities.

2.2.4 Management Services

a) Headquarters and Service Yards

The main park headquarters and service yard will continue to be located at the Clearwater entrance. Secondary depots exist and are necessary at the south end of Clearwater Lake, at the east end of Mahood Lake, and at Murtle Lake. Park staff may be based seasonally at these secondary locations.

b) Visitor Centre

Such a facility is appropriate in the long-term but it is important to clarify the objectives for such a facility and its location.

c) Backcountry Management

i) Rangers:

The Ranger Program based at Clearwater Lake will continue to cover the Clearwater-Azure corridor.
It is desirable that a "backcountry ranger" program in some form be operative in the summer months for Murtle Lake. In the future this program should be extended to the Battle Mountain area and, as use increases, to other parts of the park.

ii) Visitor Survey and Information Boards:

In order to obtain basic data regarding park use in remote areas, visitors intending to enter the backcountry may be requested to record their trip. Survey and information display boards will be located at all normal points of entry into the backcountry.

d) Site and Facility Design Standards

All sites and facilities developed for public use within the park will meet the highest design standards of the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division. Attention will be paid to consideration of safety, visual values, and operational efficiency while providing rustic, durable and cost efficient products.

e) Safety and Health

The safety and health of park visitors and management personnel are paramount concerns. Natural hazards easily accessible to the public will be appropriately posted, removed (as in the case of hazardous trees), or minimized (eg. by fencing). Potable water supplies in high use areas will be designated, and periodically tested. Toilet systems will meet Health Ministry guidelines wherever feasible. There will be periodic safety inspections of all high use areas. All normal precautions will be taken regarding safety and health.

Parks Division has no internal Search and Rescue capability, but will put its resources at the disposal of R.C.M.P. and P.E.P. in the event of any Search and Rescue emergency in the Park.

2.2.5 Promotion

a) General Principle

Wells Gray Park is considered to have a potential for interpretation and recreational use considerably greater than is being realized at present. It is desirable to raise the level of visitation, particularly to the backcountry, by raising the level of public awareness of the opportunities available.

b) Promotion Strategy

It is a high priority to develop an innovative marketing strategy for Wells Gray. This will include consideration of film, video, the use of the information media, and the role of commercial enterprises.

SECTION 3 - ZONE PLANS

3.1 General Management Plans

This section documents the essential concepts which will guide management of resources and visitor services in each zone. Because of the complexity of visitor service management some zones may be further subdivided for ease of discussion. All Resource management policies will apply throughout the park - except where specifically described in zone management objectives.

3.1.1 Intensive Recreation Zones

There are three separate areas of the park lying in this zone. The intensive use zone(s) are the major park access corridors and contain the highest use areas. All roads and associated facilities are confined to this zone.

Resource management in this zone will place a priority on protecting natural values and retaining a variety of recreation features. Particular emphasis will be placed on enhancement of visual amenity.

The primary objective in management of recreation in this zone is to provide opportunities and services primarily for a variety of auto-access destination and sightseeing recreation activities compatible with the wild and remote setting which characterizes the entire park. These zones are also the primary points of entrance.

3.1.2 Natural Environment Zones

There are a number of these zones which are along trails from the intensive use zones to various areas. They also include Clearwater Lake.

3.1.3 Wilderness Zone

Semi-primitive

These roadless areas include several of the province's most significant wilderness waterbodies as well as varied accesses to important representations of both the northwest Columbias and High Columbias landscapes.

The objective in managing this zone is to provide a range of widely distributed areas which protect unique, popular and accessible recreation wilderness opportunities accessible by various modes as specified in the sub-zone management plans.

Resource management will place a priority on retaining or restoring natural conditions.

Primitive

These roadless areas provide undeveloped wilderness with no motorized access and no facility development except as necessary to protect the natural resource base. These zones will protect areas remote from all other influences where the vestiges of the parks landscapes may be experienced by a very few.

Resource management will place a priority on protecting natural ecosystems.

INTENSIVE USE ZONE

ZONE OBJECTIVE	SUB ZONE	SUB OBJECTIVES	NEW VISITOR SERVICE INITIATIVES
a) CLEARWATER CORRIDOR FACILITIES AND SERVICES IN THIS ZONE ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE TOURIST, RECREATION DESTINATIONS OF PROVINCIAL SIGNIFICANCE. At present the zone is not used to optimum capacity on a year round basis. Improved services, better facilities and information opportunities are required at existing development nodes. The zone provides access to key natural feature destination sub-zones as well as to linear series of important sites along the Clearwater River. In addition the zone is the trailhead for trips into the central wilderness core of the park.	Parkway	Provide primary park access. Automobile based recreation opportunities are a priority for year round accessibility	Pave access to Helmcken and Clearwater Lake. Continue with gravel road on all other existing roads. Improve short trails and provide loops. Improve information and interpretation. Prepare a full assessment and plan for increased public use of Clearwater River. Access west side of river and abandoned roads to Flourmills and Mahood.
	Development	MURTLE RIVER Enhance this destination by providing access to a range of year round opportunities.	Develop new camping capacity on Murtle River. Develop improved parking, trails and information at Mushbowl bridge; Helmcken Falls; Dawson Falls. Improve trails to Clearwater R.; Whitehorse Bluffs; Majuris Farm; Murtle River. Improve winter opportunities.
		CLEARWATER LAKE Improve existing destination facilities and boating services on Clearwater Lake. Enhance existing facilities at Clearwater Lake.	Provide a water taxi and sightseeing operation. Provide canoe and small boat rentals and ancillary services. Improve and expand short trails. Relocate the existing heliport.
	Heritage	GREEN MOUNTAIN Provide a key site for interpretation of the park and a trail head.	Develop improved all weather summer road access and viewing facilities with interpretive exhibit. Develop trails to Foot Lake and Whitehorse Bluffs.
		HELMCKEN FALLS Protect and present to the public one of the province's outstanding natural features	Protect the physical and visual integrity of the Falls. Improve access and viewing facilities at the viewpoint and provide enhanced trails to encourage longer stays and improved experience.

ZONE OBJECTIVE	SUB ZONE	SUB OBJECTIVES	NEW VISITOR SERVICE INITIATIVES
		RAY FARM Present to the public the story of homesteading the wilderness.	Develop improved trails and interpretation including access to Clearwater River. (See also Resource Mgmt. Policies)
		FLOURMILLS Protect and present to the public an interesting natural feature.	Provide road access to the base of the cones. Develop trailheads for foot and horse access into the alpine. Provide interpretation.
	Park Service	Provide a suitable entrance facility and service centre.	Develop a portal and information exhibit. Review the role and alternative locations for a Visitor Centre. (Other sites include Green Mtn. and Murtle River). Review locations for a sani-station.
b) MAHOOD LAKE FACILITIES AND SERVICES IN THIS ZONE PROVIDE A REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT LAKEFRONT DESTINATION.	Parkway	Provide improved trail and information opportunities.	Improve access to Canim Falls and Canim River. Review access and development potential on Canim Lake.
This facility is well used but suffers from poor design and development. This zone also provides a key access to Mahood Lake for boating.	Development	Improve this destination area to increase use and encourage longer stays.	Redevelop boat launching. Redevelop campground to take advantage of the beach and open backshore.
c) BLUE RIVER FACILITIES AND SERVICES IN THIS ZONE PROVIDE ESSENTIAL ACCESS TO A PROVINCIALLY SIGNIFICANT WILDERNESS LAKE. This zone must provide an attractive, well developed facility compatible with the quality wilderness experience beyond.	None	None	Redevelop the parking, provide improved information. Provide service centre for park management and commercial operations using the wilderness lake. Provide attractive overnight parking for wilderness.

SEMI-PRIMITIVE WILDERNESS

ZONE OBJECTIVE	SUB ZONE	SUB OBJECTIVES	NEW VISITOR SERVICE INITIATIVES
a) BATTLE MOUNTAIN - STEVENS L. AREA THIS IS THE MOST EASILY ACCESSED WILDERNESS AREA IN THE PARK. IT WILL PROVIDE IMPROVED TRAIL ACCESS AND DESTINATIONS FOR A VARIETY OF YEAR ROUND ACTIVITIES IN THE "HIGHLANDS LANDSCAPE". The area is lightly used in summer by horse parties and slightly used by hikers. In winter there is very little use. There is potential for more use.	None	Define capacity limits for recreation use. Define and manage horse use trails and campsites. Encourage year round use.	Provide new separate access trails for horses and hikers. Provide primitive campsites. Provide opportunities for compatible commercial trail use. Investigate potential use of helicopter or snowmobile for winter access under permit to the area (NOT TRANSPORT WITHIN). Review the impacts of this use.
b) MURTLE LAKE THIS IS A PROVINCIALLY SIGNIFICANT WILDERNESS CANOE AREA IT WILL BE MANAGED TO PROTECT THAT OPPORTUNITY. The area is heavily used in peak summer. There appears to be a need to manage use by dispersal over time and around the lake.	None	Define capacity limits for recreation use. Provide trails to accessible wilderness destinations beyond the lake. Provide necessary management of recreation use.	Trails to Central Mountain, Wavy Range, Murtle River. Primitive campsites at little used beaches. Replace existing wardens residence in-situ.
c) McDOUGALL LAKE THIS PROVIDES A UNIQUE POTENTIAL FOR A WILDERNESS RECREATION CAMPSITE ACCESSED BY FLOAT PLANE. This area is presently very lightly used as a wilderness destination.	None	Define capacity limits for fishing. Review lake for potential campsite location and define design and other constraints. Review access to ensure no conflicts with other users.	No development actions at present. Investigate potential use of float plane for access under permit. Review the impacts of such use.
d) GOAT PEAKS - RAY LAKE THIS IS A LARGE HIGHLY ATTRACTIVE AREA WITH NUMEROUS POTENTIAL WILDERNESS DESTINATIONS ROUTES AND TRAILS ACCESSING THE "COLUMBIAS LANDSCAPE". It is an objective to carefully increase wilderness recreation use in this area.	None	Define year round potentials. Review access implications. Review destination potentials Review potential impacts of trail and access improvements.	Study and report on the potential and implications for development of wilderness recreation opportunities. Provide improved trails and access, depending on study recommendations and public review.

ZONE OBJECTIVE	SUB ZONE	SUB OBJECTIVES	NEW VISITOR SERVICES INITIATIVES
e) AZURE LAKE THIS IS A UNIQUE LARGE LAKE WILDERNESS OPPORTUNITY ACCESSED BY POWER BOAT. IT IS ALSO A TRAILHEAD FOR TRAILS INTO THE NORTHERN "COLUMBIAS". This lake is well used but has potential for increased visitation and for becoming an important access to the wilderness.	None	Provide increased access by boat only. Provide opportunities for access by non-boat owners and hikers accessing beyond the lake.	Develop trails to alpine north of Azure Lake. Develop trails to Rainbow Falls. Study and report on potential and implications for development of a destination facility at Rainbow Falls beach. Provide commercial water taxi services and touring opportunities.
f) HOBSON LAKE A LARGE REMOTE WILDERNESS LAKE LARGELY ACCESSED BY AIR OR LONG HIKE. In the future the northern edge of the lake may be accessed by road. At present use is light.	None	Study and report on the implications of road access to the northern end of the lake. Consider the area as a staging point for wilderness trips into the Clearwater and Hobson Creek.	No development actions at present. Provide continuing permit for existing outfitting operation.
g) EASTERN BOUNDARY A BUFFER AREA WHICH ALSO PROVIDES HIGH QUALITY ALPINE-ENVIRONMENTS FOR INCREASED AND VARIED WILDERNESS ACCESS. This area is presently lightly used but could provide opportunities for private and public access.	None	Provide access opportunities for horse, hiker, helicopter	No development actions at present. Issue commercial permit for recreational trail use. Designate trails and campsites.
h) UPPER CLEARWATER - HOBSON THIS IS A WILDERNESS RIVER SYSTEM ACCESSIBLE ONLY BY HORSE AND HIKING TRAIL. Use in this area will increase as access improves around the park boundary.	None		No development actions at present time.
i) UPPER AZURE THIS IS A REMOTE WILDERNESS WHICH PROVIDES ACCESS TO THE HIGH COLUMBIAS REMOTE WILDERNESS. This very lightly used area is becoming more accessible from outside the park. Air access will continue	None	Establish the potential and impact of mineral development.	No development actions at present time. Review proposals for any recreation opportunities and any rezoning; undertake public review Continue heli-skiing access. Review potential for increased air and trail access in summer.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

ZONE OBJECTIVE	SUB ZONE	SUB OBJECTIVES	NEW VISITOR SERVICES INITIATIVES
PROVIDES LIGHT RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES AND A LOWER LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT SOPHISTICATION IN REMOTE LOCATIONS	Clearwater Corridor	Provide trails to natural features. Protect Clearwater River for wild river recreation.	Develop trails and facilities in accordance with intensive use zone initiatives.
	Pendleton Lakes	Assess natural features and report on park values.	No actions at present time.
	Clearwater Lake	Provide varied high quality boating destination and basic facilities.	No development actions at present. Designation sites for use by water taxi service.

PRIMITIVE WILDERNESS
(NATURE CONSERVANCY)

ZONE OBJECTIVE	SUB ZONE	SUB OBJECTIVES	NEW VISITOR SERVICES INITIATIVES
DESIGNATES HIGHEST LEVEL OF WILDERNESS PROTECTION. NO MOTORIZED ACCESS.	Quesnel Highlands	Protect representative portion of this landscape.	No actions.
	High Columbias & NW.Columbias	Protect a representative of both landscapes and a full transition between them.	No actions.

RESPONSE SHEET

WELLS GRAY PROVINCIAL PARK

DRAFT MASTER PLAN

The previous phases in public involvement have resulted in many suggestions and views being encorporated into this draft plan.

Phase III of the public involvement process provides a further opportunity to review a detailed draft of the plan. Many of the basic principles have been discussed previously. An in-depth review of the proposed details is now possible. Please use this response sheet to record you comments and return the sheet to:

Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division
#101 - 1050 West Columbia Street
Kamloops, BC
V2C 1L4

SECTION ONE OF THE DRAFT

Park Role

Is the role of the park appropriate? Has it been clearly defined? Would you suggest any changes or addition?

Park Zoning

Do you feel the zoning of the park is consistent with the role statement? Do you agree with the zone definitions provided? Do you disagree with the designation of any areas within the zoning plan? If so, which ones? Why?

RESPONSE SHEET CONT'D

SECTION TWO OF THE DRAFT

Natural Resource Management Objectives and Policies

Are there any objectives and/or policies with which you disagree? If so, which ones? Why? Have other policies you support been omitted?

Visitor Services Objectives and Policies

Are there any objectives and/or policies with which you disagree? If so, which ones? Why? Have other policies you support been omitted?

SECTION THREE OF THE DRAFT

1) Among the proposals outlined, which do you strongly support? Why? Which do you strongly oppose? Why?

2) Are there proposals that you believe have been omitted but should be included? Explain them and why you support their addition to the plan.